

Chapter 5 - Just when I thought that it was resolved at last, an unforeseen situation has...

"I guess, in the end we arrived at that kind of conclusion..."

It was decided to transfer the management of the discovered tunnel to another household, according to the wish of the Eulenberg family.

In that case it will fall upon the Margrave Breithilde household as they are geographically the closest.

Since there would be rumors about a dispute between the royal family and the Margrave Breithilde household if it would become an area under the direct control of the Kingdom, it was agreed upon for the Kingdom, the Earl Baumeister household, and the Margrave Breithilde household to equally dispatch personnel for the management and guarding as compromise.

The Earl Baumeister household and the Margrave Breithilde household were given the condition of sharing the expenses of the Kingdom's guard unit.

It's what you'd call a corrupt, political agreement. To such a degree that the people of the Eulenberg household should hate it.

For them, who rarely show their faces even to other nobles, a political negotiation with the royal family and the Margrave Breithilde household would be impossible.

However, in exchange the Margrave Breithilde household has to prepare an alternative area where the Eulenberg household can cultivate maroimo.

They need to prepare a big place that has better conditions than now, and also give financial support.

It's probably also necessary to go around and explain the circumstances to the nobles who wished to arrange a marriage with Veith-san.

No matter how much advice they might get, such a stunt is impossible for the people of the Eulenberg household.

They would have been led around by the nose by cunning old nobles, ending up troubled due to weird promises they would have made.

In the end there was no other choice but for Margrave Breithilde to do something about it.

"I had a hunch that something like that would happen, but..." (Breithilde)

"If you get through this, you will be able to gain big profits." (Wendelin)

"You sure have it nice, don't you Earl Baumeister? After all you just have to leave it to Roderich-san..." (Breithilde)

My household is upstarting. My abilities as feudal lord are still unknown with me only being 17 years old as of yet.

That's why Roderich had it easy since he could proactively move around and do things on his own accord.

"I wonder, will I be turned into a puppet in the future?" (Wendelin)

"You as puppet, Earl Baumeister? That's probably impossible." (Breithilde)

"After all I'm a bad feudal lord who doesn't invest much time in his work as noble." (Wendelin)

"No, that's not correct." (Breithilde)

Margrave Breithilde flatly denies my statement.

"According to what I heard, you did paperwork as staff officer during the civil war, didn't you Earl Baumeister? Doesn't that mean that you have been a lot more intelligent than the nobles around there? However, your abilities are simply divided due to your jobs as adventurer and magician. You have achieved great deed of arms without knowing defeat. Thus I don't think that you will be turned into a puppet unless you act quite foolishly. Roderich-san is an extremely capable person. He's a person who's worthy to be trusted even in regards to his character." (Breithilde)

Roderich-san and I seem to be evaluated awfully highly by Margrave Breithilde. It's not I'm intelligent in particular. I think it's just helpful that I received an education in modern Japan and worked in a trading company. Considering it like that, it means that the education level in modern Japan was high.

"I guess you're right. That's why I can also take it easy." (Wendelin)

"I wonder about that 'easy' of yours? If it was me, I would have hated to almost die in a huge underground ruin, cast magic against an army of 10,000 soldiers, liberate the Herthania Valley, or become a major battle force in a civil war..." (Breithilde)

Now that I'm told by someone else once more, I end up thinking that we've done various things until now.

"In short, it's an assignment of roles. Earl Baumeister, you move in various flashy ways, gaining profit and concessions for the Earl Baumeister household. Meanwhile Roderich develops the territory while skilfully making use of your achievements. However..." (Breithilde)

"However, what?" (Wendelin)

"This kind of method works because you're the founder." (Breithilde)

It's unknown whether my children will be magicians. The existence of a household manager who possesses full authority like Roderich might also lead to a catastrophe later on. That means it's necessary to change the way things are handled in various ways by the next generation.

"It's Roderich-san we're talking about here, so he will probably give a strict education to your successor that might be born by Elise-san. Later he will designate his successor and split his work to young retainers while educating all of them. With this your successors in the next generations will manage the territory while commanding a group of retainers." (Breithilde)

"The construction of a permanent ruling system, huh?" (Wendelin)

"A feudal lord's authority is powerful, but a feudal lord is unable to accomplish anything by himself. Oops, we strayed from the original topic. It's about the transfer of the tunnel rights, but I

also believe that it's necessary to have the promise that this ultimately was a request from the Eulenberg household." (Breithilde)

The Eulenberg household had to officially raise the white flag and state, 『It's impossible for us! That's why we will entrust the Margrave Breithilde household with this task!』 Without that, Margrave Breithilde will be barraged with a storm of criticism by the other nobles. And the bad rumor that he threatened a small noble as high-ranking noble and stole their concessions will circulate in noble society.

"What a troublesome story." (Wendelin)

"Nobles are truly troublesome. With the Kingdom in the mix as well, we will be charged for the expenses of posts such as guard captain if their numbers increase, right? By doing that, we are paying money to the Kingdom. In case of an emergency, the Kingdom's nobles have the duty to dispatch their feudal armies, thus they don't need to pay money to the Kingdom. So we are doing it like this so that this rule won't be violated." (Breithilde)

I heard about that before.

In the past there was a system of paying money to the central government in proportion to the territory's size and military service.

However, at that time the war against the Empire has been continuing already for many years. Because of the heavy strain from that, a part of the nobles apparently planned to separate from the Kingdom.

That movement was abated by stopping the system of paying money to the government. It would be intolerable for the Margrave Breithilde household if it was said that they allowed that system to revive.

That's why it will be labelled as expenses for the stationed guard unit.

"At such times the church is easier to deal with. It would be settled by saying that we will construct a church and a pilgrim location here." (Breithilde)

The rest would work out peacefully by just continuously paying donations.

No matter whether it's good or evil, the church's management system has been perfected to a high degree.

Though it also had the same meaning as 『Low-brow』.

"I guess we will go to the Eulenberg territory then." (Wendelin)

It had turned into an unexpectedly long talk, but I had come here to fetch Margrave Breithilde.



Once I returned to the Eulenberg territory while bringing him along, the expressions of Veith-san and Lord Eulenberg brightened up as it finished without unreasonable work being forced onto them.

"Margrave Breithilde-sama." (Eulenberg)

"There's a slope suitable for maroimo cultivation where no wyverns and flying dragons come flying. It's an alternative area where you can also grow plenty of other produce. Even my Breithilde Margraviate has many places that touch on the Greater League Mountain Range. As long you search, you will definitely find a fitting spot." (Breithilde)

"That's wonderful."

Veith-san beams.

In his eyes the maroimo cultivation likely comes before the tunnel management.

"I have to immediately start with soil creation for the new territory. We finally acquired the know-how of soil preparation, but it will take ten years for the maroimo to reach their current sweetness." (Veith)

"As for that, how about having Earl Baumeister transport the fields' soil? In that way the territory's share of field soil would be carried over as well." (Breithilde)

"Earl Baumeister-sama, your abilities are truly amazing." (Veith)

The most troublesome aspect of agriculture is the soil preparation.

In that case I will just carry the soil over at the time of the relocation.

And Veith-san looked at me, who's capable of that, with eyes full of reverence.

Since he had only been scared of me so far, I feel like being respected by him for the the first time.

"Either way, the Eulenberg territory will require large-scaled construction work..."

Right now it's been forbidden to trespass since we only removed the sand and stones with magic, but it's necessary to widen the tunnel's entrance and set up measures to prevent landslides from now on.

In addition we have to enlarge the roads, remove the farm fields and residential land, and build establishments such as parking lots for carriages and inns for the people that will go through the tunnel.

If we were to be negligent in preparing those, it would be possible for the tunnel users to cause huge congestions before entering the tunnel.

Not just lodging facilities and warehouses to store the cargo, but restaurant streets and pleasure quarters are necessary as well, I suppose.

Getting the fief's population to relocate in order to build those necessary facilities was the reality. Since the same facilities are also necessary on the Baumeister Earldom's tunnel side, I have already submitted a request to Baron Rembrandt, who's also an architect, and he's in the process of drawing the blueprints.

Once those are finished, I have to work on the foundations for a while.

The shortened construction method of having even buildings that had been built by many workers in the capital transported with Baron Rembrandt's 『Relocation』 had started according to Roderich's plan.

As a matter of fact, various things are already in motion.

"If you add such development to the management of the tunnel, it would have been increasingly impossible for us."

"There's also the aspect that it will become difficult to cultivate maroimo once you construct such things within your territory."

Lord Eulenberg laments that it exceeds the limits of their abilities. Veith-san is worried that the maroimo fields will disappear once the construction work starts.

"The slope with the maroimo fields has to be reinforced in order to prevent landslides. Please take the soil, since it will be removed at some point anyway."

"Thank you very much."

Veith-san expresses his gratitude towards Margrave Breithilde's kindness.

At first there had been various issues, but with this the difficult problems were finally resolved.

Even though everyone was delighted, the Goddess of Fate seems to be quite whimsical.

We encountered a big problem once again.

Suddenly the entrance door of the Eulenberg mansion was energetically opened with a slam, and a single person rushed inside the room.

"Father! Elder Brother! Are you sane!? Even though it's a great chance for a major breakthrough for the Eulenberg household, why are you happily yielding a golden egg to others!?"

""Katia?""

"Dear, this person is..." (Elise)

"For real?"

It's the skilled female adventurer Katia who subjugated the wyverns and flying dragons with us just the other day.

She told us that she originated from the Eulenberg territory, but now way, for here to appear in this place...

And, her calling Lord Eulenberg and Veith-san as father and elder brother means that's she's no resident, but surprisingly the Eulenberg family's daughter.

"Katia, you have come home quite early. According to schedule it should have been next month."

"Katia, did you run out of the dried maroimo I gave you before?"

"I still have some of those...gah! That's not it! I hurried back home since I heard rumors that my family's home is in such situation!" (Katia)

We had concealed those news from her, but I guess, as might be expected of an excellent adventurer.

She apparently learned about the latest situation of her home through her connections.

Come to think of it, Katia has many acquaintances and she's also well-known.

In contrast to Katia who rushed in with such great haste, Lord Eulenberg and Veith-san carefreely asked her about the reason for her homecoming.

Katia seems to regularly return home as she has a good relationship with her family.

When asked about her stock of dried maroimo by Veith-san, she answers honestly. She might be an

unexpectedly docile girl.
However, dried maroimo, huh...?

"This was definitely a blind spot. We have to go back and buy dried maroimo on our way home."
(Wendelin)

"No, that's not the issue right now, is it...?"

"You might say that. But, no matter how this situation might develop, it doesn't change the fact that dried maroimo exist." (Wendelin)

"You, at such a time..."

Erw was astounded, but how much is the difference in sweetness to dried sweet potatoes?
Since that bothered me, it didn't change my feeling of wanting to quickly obtain them.

"Excuse me, Lord Eulenberg. I'm sorry as I might be lacking the information, but who's the young lady over there?" (Breithilde)

"She's my daughter, Katia, which makes her Veith's younger sister." (Eulenberg)

"Your daughter, you say...?"

Margrave Breithilde confirmed instead of me, but Katia was a daughter of the Eulenberg household after all.

I think that it's a disgrace to not have known that there's a daughter in the Eulenberg household despite them being his own vassals, but if I may say one thing in his defense: since there's not a single person among the nobles, who knows about her, I think the same offence applies to all of them.

After all it didn't trouble anyone until now even without knowing about it in particular.

"Katia-san, you are working outside the fiefdom?" (Breithilde)

"Aye, as adventurer. Until just the other day I subjugated wyverns and flying dragons with Earl Baumeister's party over there." (Katia)

"Is that so, Earl Baumeister?" (Breithilde)

"Yes, at that time we heard that she comes from the Eulenberg territory, but certainly I didn't expect her to be a member of the feudal lord's family." (Wendelin)

"I see, that makes sense." (Breithilde)

Margrave Breithilde looked as if he could agree with that.

Because she's an adventurer? Or because of her temperament?

Katia doesn't change her tone even with Margrave Breithilde as conversation partner.

There were few capable adventurers who suddenly act ingratiatingly just because the other party is a high-ranking noble.

It's not like there are absolutely none, but that doesn't mean that they have a troubled life even if

they are doubted by one or two high-ranking nobles. That's because there's a trend for other adventurers to belittle those, who take a menial attitude towards influential people in the world of adventurers where one is only judged by their abilities.

To go even further; since there were many people who work as adventurers while hiding their nobility like Katia, there was no reason for such people to abase themselves even if the other party might be a high-ranking noble.

"Oi, Katia. The person over there is..." (Eulenberg)

Lord Eulenberg's face became pale due to his own daughter boldly talking to Margrave Breithilde as if he was her equal, but, in this case Katia's side is in the right.

Lord Eulenberg is too menial, but it can't be helped since this seems to stem from his character.

"Margrave Breithilde-sama, right? Unfortunately I'm currently an adventurer." (Katia)

"I don't really mind." (Breithilde)

Margrave Breithilde didn't have a problem with her tone either.

Being a high-ranking noble, he has many opportunities to meet with adventurers for requests such as the subjugation of monsters in his territory.

He's fully aware of the temperament of adventurers, or rather it's meaningless to look down on adventurers. There are nobles, who turn away and denunciate adventurers for their rude behavior, but that turns into a disadvantage for such people.

It happens that they will be refused with 『I don't want to do requests from that noble』, even if they call for their help.

The excellent Margrave Breithilde won't make such a mistake.

"Katia-san isn't my retainer, after all." (Breithilde)

"Hee, nothing less from a high-ranking noble-sama. It helps that you grasp things quickly." (Katia)

Next Katia turned her eyes in Burkhart-san's direction.

As mana holder, she apparently comprehends Burkhart-san's true ability.

Just that served as proof of her being a great adventurer.

"Hello." (Burkhart)

However, Burkhart-san has no particular interest in Katia, and only greets her normally.

"(Burkhart-san, you aren't interested Katia?)"

"(Not really.)" (Burkhart)

Burkhart-san answered to Erw's whisper with a curt tone.

Burkhart-san probably prefers girls like his wife.

Besides, if one were to speak of unexpected facts, Burkhart-san is eccentric, but he likes well-mannered women.

"You barge in all of a sudden, but what is it that makes you so dissatisfied, Katia?"

Given that we have a relationship of having worked together, I asked Katia about her discontent without beating around the bush.

There's no way to deal with it unless that remains obscure.

"What, you ask...the tunnel rights belong to the Eulenberg household, no matter how you look at it, don't they!? I don't know whether it's the Kingdom or our patron, but brute forcing their way to forcibly steal it from us is terrible!" (Katia)

"Though it's no brute forcing....in the first place, Lord Eulenberg and Veith-san have refused to manage the tunnel."

No wonder that Margrave Breithilde refused at first.

Because the news and the Internet don't exist in this world, rumors that the tunnel rights might belong to the small noble household of Eulenberg are going around, and speculations whether the Margrave Breithilde household will confiscate those rights as patron and high-ranking noble will spread as they please.

Just as Katia returned home after worrying about that, her own father and elder brother were discussing to yield the tunnel rights to the Margrave Breithilde household, just as the rumors said. Her having stormed in yelling while panicking about that is likely the real situation.

"However, it's not something everyone is all smiles by us just irresponsibly taking tolls."

"I do know that!" (Katia)

"Really?"

"Yeah!"

Since the flow of people and goods will be accelerated by the tunnel, the negative issues will increase as well.

The movements of illegal goods and criminals will increase, too.

In addition, the tunnel will become an important infrastructure connecting the Breithilde Margraviate and the Baumeister Earldom.

Even if the Kingdom might have signed a peace treaty with the Empire, it was possible that subversive activities to obstruct this place could be carried out if the war starts again.

There's also the danger that the remnants of the deceased Duke Nürnberg could target the tunnel for terror acts in order to stage their comeback by riling the Empire and the Kingdom to fight against each other.

"That's why the Kingdom's guard unit will join as well. Even with them present, we would need to properly manage and guard half of the tunnel, except for the magic illumination control room which belongs to the Earl Baumeister household. It would take suitable time and labor."

"If the Eulenberg household prepares for that..." (Katia)

"We arrived at that conclusion because we can't do that, though. There are also other reasons."

There's also the establishment of roads around the tunnel's entrance and surrounding facilities for

the tunnel users.

A facility that handles the checking of the tunnel users' social status and the cargo they are bringing along, like a customs, becomes necessary, too.

"It requires a large amount of money, personnel and know-how. It will be a problem if the tunnel entrance on the Knight Eulenberg's side is always congested while the entrance on the Baumeister Earldom's side works smoothly. If that were to happen, the territory would be taken away by the Kingdom due to negligence in your duties as nobles." (Breithilde)

"Uuh!"

Katia is overwhelmed by the pointed arguments of Margrave Breithilde.

"Even so, elder brother has...even the method to manage it through the Eulenberg household..."

"It's not impossible."

"There is one, isn't there?"

Once it proceeds in the direction of the tunnel not being taken away, a smile returned to Katia's face.

"It has the condition that accepts the talks about the formal marriage interviews."

Margrave Breithilde pointed at the bundle of marriage photos Burkhart-san had brought here.

"There are many households of Viscount rank and above who possess money, personnel and the know-how. Money and personnel will be sent in together with Veith-dono's wife from her home. They will maintain the tunnel. On the outside it will be the Eulenberg household, but in reality it will be hijacked by his wife's home." (Breithilde)

Her home will be hijacked.

Katia's expression immediately became very sullen due to that possibility.

"It would be a disagreeable situation for the Margrave Breithilde household, but we can endure. Since the royal army will be stationed here as well, there probably won't be any troubles, and his wife's home likely won't try pull anything strange either. After all the Eulenberg territory is surrounded by the Breithilde Margraviate."

They certainly want the tunnel right, but it's not like they want to thrust their fangs into the rights of the Margrave Breithilde household.

They would hope to avoid needless confrontations and conflicts.

"By the way, the idea of sending a wife to you, Veith-dono, is advantageous for us of the Margrave Breithilde household. After all we are the patron of the Eulenberg household." (Breithilde)

If the patron introduces a wife to the heir of their vassal, the other nobles won't have any choice but to stay silent.

As result funds and personnel from close vassals or relatives of the Margrave Breithilde household

would enter the Eulenberg territory, essentially hijacking the Eulenberg household.

"It's a method I'd like to avoid since it has a bad reputation in society, but Veith-dono, if you had decided to welcome a wife from another noble household, I thought about enforcing that plan. In the end it's fine though as Lord Eulenberg and Veith-dono are properly understanding the situation and made the best choice, but..." (Breithilde)

Margrave Breithilde sent a look in Katia's direction that told her 『If not only for unnecessary meddlers to butt in...』.

Now that I have heard about those circumstances, I increasingly feel that it would be difficult for the Eulenberg household to manage the tunnel by themselves.

"To put it in few words, I guess it's 'bite what you can chew'..."

Lord Eulenberg muttered only those few words.

"There's that as well. Since the surrounding farming fields have to be destroyed for the tunnel's construction work...it will have a big impact on the harvest amount of maroimo..." (Veith)

On top of the farmland diminishing, he hates spending time on anything besides farmwork, Veith-san said.

"Brother! The tunnel management is much more profitable than that farmwork of yours!" (Katia)

"Agriculture is the foundation of people. People won't survive without food. Besides, Katia, you like maroimo, don't you? Don't you always take a huge amount of dried maroimo with you after when you leave?" (Veith)

"If it's maroimo, you just have to buy agricultural land somewhere else after earning money with the tunnel management, though!" (Katia)

The grounded elder brother, who has dabbled long and minutely in agriculture and maroimo cultivation, and the younger sister who hopes for the Eulenberg household's development through the tunnel management.

The brother, who has remained at home, is conservative. The sister, who left home, is progressive towards new things. I guess she still has slim chances to win?

"Katia-san, unfortunately that's impossible." (Breithilde)

"Is it because the entire vicinity belongs to the Breithilde Margraviate?" (Katia)

"That's a part of it, but it's forbidden by the Kingdom for nobles to trade land between each other." (Breithilde)

"Really?"

"Eh? You didn't know?"

"Uhh..."

That makes sense.

If the nobles increased or decreased their territories as they please by trading them amongst each other, it would be a major pain for the Kingdom's side that manages the nobles.

If a territory suddenly reached the scale of an Earldom by buying out Knight territories, it would likely cause grave difficulties for the Kingdom's political measures to manage its nobles.

Of course there are exceptions, but to do that, one has to win in a dispute and conclude an advantageous arbitration plan.

"You will be punished by the Kingdom, if you sell land on your own accord."

"It's fine to simply exchange land, isn't it!?" (Katia)

"That has to be permitted by the Kingdom."

If the Kingdom gives its permission as foundation of the nobility laws, even acts that violate the laws will be tolerated as exception.

I can't believe that the Kingdom will refuse Margrave Breithilde's proposal in this case.

Since they haven't presented any plans to resolve the situation until now.

"Damn! That's unfair!" (Katia)

"Unfair, you say...this is the decision which Lord Eulenberg and Veith-dono made based on reality. I think it's close to the best possible solution..." (Breithilde)

"Father! Brother! You got to stand firm here! If you do it skilfully, not only Baron, but even Viscount will be in reach! What's the idea in giving up here!?" (Katia)

Katia, who ended up losing the argument against Margrave Breithilde, next turned her focus on her father and brother, trying to motivate the two.

Since she was confuted logically, it looks like she has switched over to appealing emotionally.

Having said that, saying do something about it with fighting spirit...it's not as if they are pre-war Japanese soldier. That idealism is extreme.

"Elise, is she becoming this headstrong because of her sadness of losing her birthplace?" (Wendelin)

I thought that Katia has become so emotional because she's going to lose her home, and try asking Elise whether that's correct.

"With the tunnel's management, the Eulenberg household will make big progress. She's someone who has left her family, but she will be happy if my home can make a breakthrough. I think that's it roughly." (Elise)

"Again troublesome..."

Even though everything would have been resolved, if Katia hadn't appeared. I end up cursing the god of fate.

"Brother, welcoming a wife doesn't work for you, right? In that case I will find a husband, have him take responsibility and leave the tunnel management to him." (Katia)

"(Why does it have to go in this direction...?)"

I quietly grumbled about Katia's weird decision.

Even if she uses such irregular method, it won't change the fact that the Eulenberg household will be turned into a puppet.

After hearing Katia's absurd suggestion, even Margrave Breithilde openly frowned.

"She will return to my position as daughter of a noble household. That's not really unusual..." (Katia)

It's as Ina says.

Katia, who should have originally been married into some noble household, was able to act freely by leaving the house and becoming an adventurer due to the Eulenberg household's unique circumstances.

Thus she would simply return to her original status.

"Therefore, please introduce a capable husband, who will do his best for the Eulenberg household, to me, Patron Margrave Breithilde." (Katia)

"Wha-!? Katia-san, where did you hear about this story to begin with?" (Breithilde)

"Now that you mention it, it's slightly odd."

"Her coming here was a bit too fast."

We bid farewell from here in Baulburg. Recently the adventurer guild's size is growing at a good pace, but compared to the capital or Breitburg, the number of adventurers is low. That also means Baulburg's adventurer guild falls behind in its speed of obtaining information.

I won't go as far as saying that there are definitely no nobles who know about this, but since it's my territory, that shouldn't really be the case.

It's no wonder that Wilma and Katharina are suspicious.

"As a matter of fact, right after leaving Earl Baumeister's party, I unexpectedly ran into an adventurer who's a bit of an acquaintance. He kindly told me about it." (Katia)

Hearing about this story, Katia quickly jumped on a magic airship headed for Breitburg, and ran from Breitburg to the Eulenberg territory while boosting her speed with magic, she explains proudly.

It looks like that Katia is capable of the same feat as 『Yufa the Gale』, who visited us as messenger during the civil war.

"For the likes of messengers and spies employed by the church or adventurer guild, 1,000 km in a day is impossible. However if it's 200-300 km, it's not such a big deal for them either."

After all they would move around with that much speed during battle.

I guess it's not that complicated if you dedicate your mana solely to traveling.

"As long as I'm alive I won't allow us to get deceived so easily. I'm begging you here, Margrave Breithilde-sama." (Katia)

"...Umm, Margrave Breithilde..." (Wendelin)

"Earl Baumeister, even without telling everyone..." (Breithilde)

Suddenly receiving an unreasonable request from Katia, Margrave Breithilde dropped his shoulders in disappointment.